



News Release

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State disciplines health care providers

OLYMPIA -- The Washington State Department of Health has taken disciplinary actions or withdrawn charges against health care providers in our state.

The department's Health Systems Quality Assurance Division works with boards, commissions, and advisory committees to set licensing standards for more than 80 health care professions (e.g., medical doctors, nurses, counselors).

Information about health care providers is on the agency website. Click on "[Look up a healthcare provider license](#)" in the "How Do I?" section of the [Department of Health website](#) (doh.wa.gov). The site includes information about a health care provider's license status, the expiration and renewal date of their credential, disciplinary actions and copies of legal documents issued after July 1998. This information is also available by calling 360-236-4700. Consumers who think a health care provider acted unprofessionally are encouraged to call and report their complaint.

Clark County

In December 2014 the Nursing Commission entered an agreement with registered nurse **Robert John Watez** (RN00126536) that places his credential on probation for at least one year and fines him \$500. The Oregon State Board of Nursing put Watez on probation in 2013 in connection with sexually inappropriate behavior toward co-workers.

In December 2014 the Nursing Assistant Program reinstated the certified nursing assistant credential of **Cindy M. Wheeler**, also known as Cindy M. Higdon (NC10079361), and placed her on probation for at least two years. Wheeler's credential was suspended in 2012 after she didn't give medication to patients at a boarding home where she worked.

In December 2014 the Nursing Assistant Program charged registered nursing assistant **Robert B. McBain** (NA00092892) with unprofessional conduct. Charges say McBain and his wife owned and operated an adult family home that admitted a 97-year-old dementia patient. While at the home, the patient allegedly developed wounds due to substandard care. He was then admitted to a hospital as a result, and then to hospice care where the patient died. The Department of Social and Health Services found that McBain had neglected a vulnerable adult.

In January 2015 the Nursing Commission charged registered nurse **Sarah Adair Harris** (RN60457004) with unprofessional conduct. Charges say Harris didn't comply with a substance

abuse monitoring contract, missed a scheduled drug test, didn't check-in with the monitoring program as required, and tested positive for alcohol.

King County

In December 2014 the Chemical Dependency Professional Program conditionally granted a chemical dependency professional credential to **Matthew Bennet Ellefson** (CP60489437), who must continue to comply with conditions imposed when he received a chemical dependency professional trainee credential in 2012.

In December 2014 the Nursing Commission ended probation for registered nurse and licensed practical nurse **Leonard M. Muigua** (RN60106705, LP00056164).

In December 2014 the Nursing Commission ended probation for registered nurse **Raynee J. Frederick** (RN60001541).

In January 2015 the Dental Commission charged dentist **Robert E. Buda** (DE00007787) with unprofessional conduct. Buda allegedly didn't meet the standard of care in treating a patient during a two-hour appointment. Charges say an anesthesiologist called emergency medical technicians to take the patient to a hospital, where she was admitted, but Buda didn't report the hospitalization to the commission.

In January 2015 the Nursing Assistant Program charged certified nursing assistant **Shevin E. Lindsey** (NC10063275) with unprofessional conduct. Charges say Lindsey worked at a nursing home that housed a 95-year-old dementia patient who "exhibited exit-seeking behavior," and whose care plan required that she be checked on every 15 minutes. Lindsey allegedly checked on the patient at about 11 a.m., and at about 2 p.m. After Lindsey's shift ended, the patient was discovered outside on an enclosed patio, unconscious, sunburned, and with a temperature of 106-degrees. The patient allegedly hadn't been given lunch and hadn't been taken to the toilet after breakfast.

Kitsap County

In November 2014 the secretary of health denied a home care aide credential to **Brittany Nichole Clauson** (HM60401872). In 2013 Clauson was charged with first-degree trafficking in stolen property. She allegedly stole a client's necklace, and used the client's bank card to withdraw cash and make other purchases for her own use. Clauson hasn't responded to a Department of Health investigator's inquiry.

In January 2015 the Massage Program charged massage practitioner **Tyrel N. Kuebler** (MA60277825) with unprofessional conduct. While Kuebler was massaging a woman, he allegedly touched the side of her breast, pulled her draping and underwear down to her knees, and touched her pubic area.

Pierce County

In December 2014 the Nursing Commission entered an agreement with licensed practical

nurse **Becky L. Spradlin** (LP00054995) that places her credential on probation for at least five years. In 2014 Spradlin was convicted of first-degree theft.

Snohomish County

In December 2014 the Nursing Commission reinstated the credential of registered nurse **Tanna N. Vigue-Dry** (RN00155709) and ordered her to participate in a substance abuse monitoring program. Vigue-Dry's Washington license was suspended in 2014 after the Texas Board of Nursing suspended her license to practice in that state because she didn't comply with an agreement to participate in a substance abuse monitoring program.

Spokane County

In December 2014 the Marriage and Family Therapist Program charged marriage and family therapist **Darlene Anne Townsend** (LF00001054) with unprofessional conduct. Charges say her treatment of two patients was below the standard of care and she treated multiple family members individually, causing confusion and undermining therapeutic objectivity. Townsend allegedly suggested a medication regimen for a client, attended a meeting at the client's school and discussed confidential information without parental consent, discussed one client's mental health issues with another client's primary care physician without consent, let a client borrow two dresses, and didn't reflect treatment goals in her notes.

In December 2014 the secretary of health ended probation for chemical dependency professional trainee **Kari Jolene Swecker** (CO60336493).

In December 2014 the Nursing Commission ended probation for registered nurse **J. Michael Munoz Flores** (RN00133870).

In December 2014 the Physical Therapy Board ended probation for physical therapist **Jeffrey Randall Waters** (PT00005489).

In December 2014 the Chemical Dependency Professional Program conditionally granted a chemical dependency professional credential to **Larry G. Howard** (CP60506174), who must continue to comply with conditions imposed when his chemical dependency professional trainee credential was reinstated in August 2014.

Thurston County

In January 2015 the Mental Health Counselor Program charged mental health counselor associate **Tammy Lynn Putvin** (MC60113022) with unprofessional conduct. Charges say Putvin provided counseling services to a married couple, but when one client moved away, Putvin continued to bill the client's insurance company for weekly sessions for nearly a year. When the other client was interested in only massage therapy from Putvin's husband, she allegedly billed the insurance company for counseling sessions at each massage appointment. Putvin allegedly didn't give the clients signed copies of the disclosure statement, didn't include

her supervisor's name and contact information on the disclosure statement, and didn't keep regular counseling notes.

Whatcom County

In December 2014 the Nursing Commission entered an agreement with registered nurse **Tina M. Brightwell** (RN00069951) that places her credential on probation for at least two years and fines her \$500. Brightwell was assigned to care for an 89-year-old patient with diagnoses of arterial fibrillation, stroke, heart failure, and dementia. When the patient refused to take a prescribed vitamin orally, Brightwell faxed the patient's physician, but didn't request an order to inject the vitamin and didn't follow-up with the physician.

Out of State

California: In December 2014 the Nursing Commission ended probation for registered nurse **Christine Anne Gotelli** (RN00104776).

Oregon: In December 2014 the Medical Commission conditionally reinstated the physician assistant credential of **Eduardo R. Valenzuela** (PA10004788). He must complete a boundaries program, undergo an assessment by a substance abuse monitoring program, and may not issue prescriptions for himself or his family members. Valenzuela's license was suspended in 2010 in connection with prescribing medications without legal authority.

Oregon: In December 2014 the Surgical Technologists Program charged surgical technologist **Harry G. Hoops** (ST60276754) with unprofessional conduct. Charges say that while Hoops was at work, he was incoherent, vague, had difficulty with tasks, difficulty standing, trouble completing sentences and kept repeating phrases. Hoops allegedly tested positive for alcohol, methadone, and opiates. He had no prescription for drugs containing opiates.

Oregon: In December 2014 the Nursing Commission charged registered nurse **Julie C. Burns** (RN00177471) with unprofessional conduct. Charges say Burns surrendered her Oregon license after she didn't meet monitoring practice requirements.

Note to Editors: Health care providers charged with unprofessional conduct have 20 days to respond to the Department of Health in writing. The case then enters the settlement process. If no disciplinary agreement can be reached, the case will go to a hearing.

The [Department of Health website](http://www.doh.wa.gov) (www.doh.wa.gov) is your source for *a healthy dose of information*. Also, [find us on Facebook](#) and [follow us on Twitter](#).

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